2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint from his body (Pl. 23E). 764

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [304] [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over. [775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D). [775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibunglialumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it. 765

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes. 761

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,[50] had changed himself into a [825] [754]

[50] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the mature-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The designs on sections *d* and *f* also relate to the goanna. The small white discs on *d* are goanna holes; the cross-hatched diamonds, its skin patterns, and the dots, its eggs. The triangles on *f* are the ribs, and the dots, the fat of the same creature. White and red bands on *e*, symbolise waves breaking on the beach. 532x 765

The shapes of Pl. 36D are: *a* is white cloud; the rectangular opening *e*, a door, and the thinner section *f*, a post of a house. Section *d* is a large boulder, and *g*, *h*, the trunks of a fan palm.

The painted, cross-hatched bands, *b*, on section *e*, indicate goanna fat; the alternate bands, *c*, *c*, etc., are rocks on the shore, and the central white disc on *d* is the light from an electric torch. The vertical lines radiating from this disc are aboriginal paths; the horizontal bands are adjacent mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched rectangles, discarded fish-bones on its banks.

The circles at *g* are rocks in the sea, and the white lines represent rope used for catching turtles. The dots on the background symbolize turtle eggs in the sand. The vertical bands on *h* are mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched areas, body scars on the backs and arms of old men and women.[9]

The two projections at *a* on Pl. 36F, are the front flippers of a turtle, the opening, *c*, is a window, and *d*, a door. The lower section is a European house.

The cross-hatching at *e*, *e*, represents the marks on the handles of throwing sticks (Pl. 32D); the transverse bands, *f*, and the vertical bands, *g*, *g*, aboriginal tracks in the forest, and the dots, stars in the sky.

The upper projections at *a* (Pl. 37D), are the branches of trees, the rectangular opening below is a doorway, the two cylindrical sections, *h*, *h*, are rocks on the coast, and the design, *j*, is a stingray.

The painted designs refer almost exclusively to the decorations used at a *pukamuni* ceremony. The chevron bands at *b* and *c* on the upper projections, *a*, are coloured cane, and plain, feathered *pukamuni* arm ornaments respectively (Pl. 31E, F). Painted designs at *f*, *f*, are arm ornaments similar to those at *b*, *c*. The plain band, *g*, however, represents chest ornaments (Pl. 31D, G). The circles at *d*, *d*, are *pukamuni* cane armlets, and the cross-hatched rectangles and panels *h*, *h*, *h*, the chevron body scars of the performers. [301]

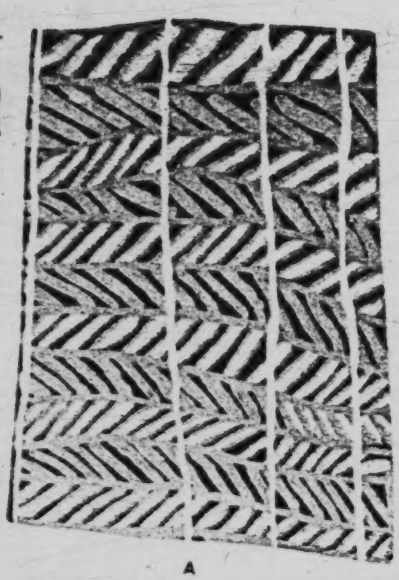
(*b*) *The Pukamuni of Makapini*

As in the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*, the poles of *Makapini* were looked upon as a family; Pl. 34B, the mother; Pl. 34A, an adolescent daughter,

[9] Until recently, both men and women were decorated with elaborate series of chevron scars on the arms, legs and back (Pl. 29A). This practice has been discontinued. [304]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

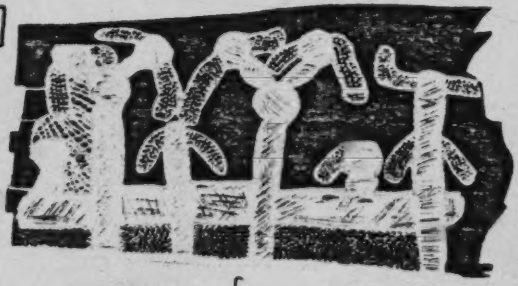
x532
[304]
[821]



A

B

[137]



C

D

PLATE 58. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Chevron Body Scars; B, Wet-season Sky; C, Honey-bearing Trees; D, Unidentified.

[p. 160 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X 532 137

branches in full blossom. The dots at the base of the painting indicate eucalyptus blossoms lying on the ground.

A Forest, Curtis Haven

Pl. 53A illustrates the topography at Curtis Haven.

Transverse panel *a*, is a stringy-bark tree,[83] *b*, *c*, are two woolly-butts and *m*, is an ironwood. The short white panels at *f*, *f*, are cycad palms; the lines of circles at *g*, *g*, *g*, low hills, and the short white panels between them, cabbage palms. The cross-hatching indicates the grass on the hillsides.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND UNIDENTIFIED

X 532 304

Body Scars

Pl. 58A refers to the chevron scars on the bodies of the older men and women; it has no other meaning.

The four white vertical lines indicate the scars on their legs; the many transverse lines, those across the abdomens, and the lines of dark and light-coloured chevron designs, the scars on the abdomens, backs, upper arms, and thighs.[84]

The Salmon-man

X 532 302

At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, a salmon-man painted himself and his many wives with a series of large spots like those on the basket; when at the completion of the ceremony, those people became fish, they still retained the coloured spots on their bodies. The dots on Pl. 58C are symbolical of those on the body of the mythical salmon-man.

Design for a Pukamuni Pole

X 532 136

Pl. 54D is a similar design to one which the artist once painted on a *pukamuni* pole he made for the dead man, *Kulutina*. The designs,[85] which are not linked with any myth or secular story, were, according to the artist, formed in his mind by the sound of the waves breaking on a nearby coast.

The four groups of crossed lines, *g*, *g*, etc., represent trepang, the lighter coloured being the white and the darker, the black species. The smaller

[83] These are species of eucalypts.

[84] The older generation of Melville and Bathurst Islanders were decorated with these scars. The custom has been discontinued in recent years. Spencer, 1928, Fig. 439, illustrates examples.

[85] Spencer, 1928, Fig. 475, illustrates poles decorated with a design similar to bark paintings, Pl. 54D.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies, but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black. *Case* (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 391.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII–XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *vid* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcize, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

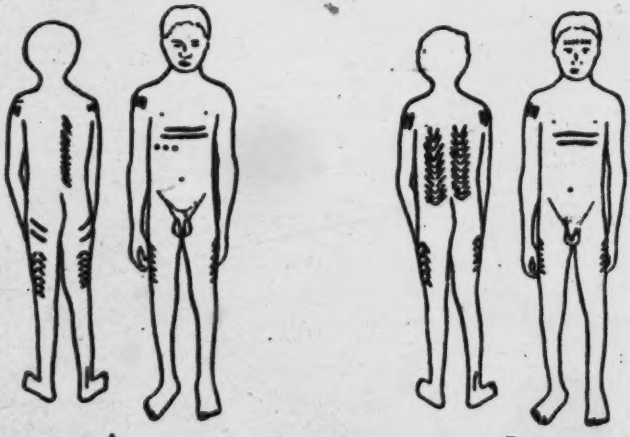
"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

302 black; ears, red; hair and beard on lower part of chin, yellow. *Case* (4): Lower half of face from below the eyes to the chin, yellow, excepting the lips and the immediate surrounding, which are red; the upper half of face divided vertically in a median line, the left segment being black and the right red. *Case* (5): A broad, horizontal band of black extends across the forehead and the eyes; beneath this, the whole face is yellow, excepting (as in the previous case) the nose and lips, which are red. *Case* (6): A broad horizontal band of black across the forehead; beneath this, the whole surface from the eyes to the level of the nostrils, yellow; the remaining portion including the lips and chin, red. *Case* (7): The crown of the head and hair, red, the forehead yellow; a black horizontal band across the eyes, below which the whole surface is yellow, excepting the nose and lips (as in previous cases), which are red. More complicated patterns are better understood by referring to the sketches.

Body Scars.

●304 [301] A type of cosmetic body-scars is prevalent on the island, which is unique and different from the system found on the mainland. The production of this permanent ornamentation is, as elsewhere, dependent on the formation of an elevated cicatrix. This is done by cutting the skin and artifically inducing a prolific granulation by



A B

FIG. 2.

keeping the edges of the wound apart with foreign matter, such as ochre and ashes. [171] On the mainland we find such cicatrices in the form of horizontally or vertically disposed parallel ridges on various parts of the body. Although to a small extent such are also found on Bathurst Island, the characteristic pattern there is one made in direct imitation of an object of nature, namely, the frond of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*). The former simple type of cicatrices, consisting of two to five,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

or more, parallel ridges, is found first, as vertically disposed ridges, about 10 centimetres in length, on the outer surface of the upper arm, in the region of the deltoid muscle (*vide* Fig. 2, A and B); secondly, as two or three horizontal ridges, about 20 centimetres long, upon the chest and abdomen, either in the epigastrium or immediately below the nipples, or in the umbilical region; thirdly, as two or three ridges, horizontally disposed or slightly inclined from back to front, on the buttocks and outer surface of the thighs (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Occasionally a horizontal row of short vertical scars is cut upon the forehead immediately above the eyes (*vide* Fig. 2, B); and also an asymmetrical vertical group on the chest or back consisting of a number of parallel scars which slant outwards and downwards from the sternum or spine, respectively (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

The palm-leaf pattern is composed of a series of V-shaped figures, whose angles rest one within the other and point downwards (or upwards as the case may be) and are so disposed as to lie one immediately above or below the other in a vertical line; the enclosing sides standing out as parallel and inclined ridges. The constituent V's are often slightly larger in the centre of the group than at either

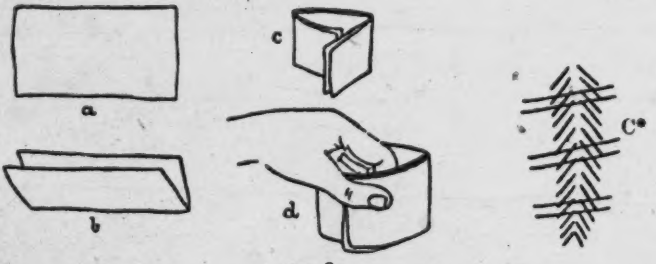


FIG. 3.

end. There is little doubt that the incentive to this design was given by the leaf of the "*Zamia*" (*Cycas media*). The designs, being of different dimensions and of different lengths according to their situation, were observed on the back (on both or either side of the spine) and on the upper and outer surfaces of the arm and thigh (*vide* Plate XVI). The number of the completed palm leaves, in any one particular part of the body, varies. The usual number is from one to three on the arms and thighs, and from two to five, or more, on the back. The design was not noticed on the chest or abdomen. Occasionally a design on the thigh might be seen modified by additional pairs of horizontal scars[1] (*vide* Fig. 3, C*).

[1] I also observed the same "palm-leaf" scars on the chest, back, and arms of Melville Island natives. These natives also paint their faces with ochre; one conspicuous method in use is to paint the hair yellow, the nose red, and to daub the chest yellow over the region of the sternum.

Professor H. Klaatsch also noticed some of the scars on the Melville Island natives and stated that "they are totally different from the ornamentations on the mainland. They seem to imitate leaves arranged on a branch; but I make the suggestion that they are connected with the arrangements of the barbs on spears." *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 566.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. Camp fires are, as usual, 372 much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca.1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog 825 (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may 757 often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.